

Message Text

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ACTION PA-02

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10 L-03
SP-02 SS-15 IO-14 SSM-05 /069 W
-----073176 011058Z /11

O 010728Z MAR 78 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6117
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

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DEPT FOR S/PRS AND PA, PASS NSC FOR DR. BRZEZINSKI AND WHITE
HOUSE FOR MR. POWELL

USIA FOR IPS

E.O.11652:N/A
TAGS: OVIP (ATHERTON, ALFRED L.)
SUBJECT: ATHERTON STATEMENT AFTER MEETING FM KAMEL

FOLLOWING ARE REMARKS TO THE PRESS BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY
ATHERTON AND FOREIGN MINISTER KAMEL FOLLOWING A MEETING AT
MFA ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28.

ATHERTON: THE MINISTER AND I HAVE HAD A VERY GOOD PRELIMINARY TALK.
I HAVE REPORTED TO HIM ON MY MOST RECENT ROUND OF TALKS IN ISRAEL.
WE DISCUSSED IN A PRELIMINARY WAY THE ISRAELI SUGGESTIONS ON THE
DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES WHICH I BROUGHT WITH ME, AND WE WILL BE
MEETING AGAIN TOMORROW MORNING TO CONTINUE THIS DISCUSSION ON THE
DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.
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QUESTION: DO YOU FEEL NOW THAT WE ARE IN A BETTER POSITION IN
REACHING AN UNDERSTANDING ON BOTH SIDES OF THIS MISSION?
ATHERTON: I SAID BEFORE I DON'T THINK IT'S USEFUL TO TRY TO
CHARACTERIZE EVERY INDIVIDUAL MEETING WE HAVE, OR TO TRY TO
DESCRIBE WHERE WE ARE IN THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS AT EACH STEP
ALONG THE WAY. THE PROCESS IS CONTINUING, AND IT IS CONTINUING

WITH A SERIOUS INTENT. WE ARE CONTINUING OUR WORK, AND OBVIOUSLY THERE IS STILL WORK TO BE DONE, BUT IT IS GOING FORWARD, AND WE INTEND TO KEEP IT GOING FORWARD.

QUESTION: DO YOU EXPECT A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES BEFORE MR. BEGIN GOES TO WASHINGTON?

ATHERTON: WE WANT TO GET A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES JUST AS SOON AS IT CAN BE AGREED. I DON'T WANT TO PREDICT AT EXACTLY WHAT POINT IN TIME THAT MAY HAPPEN.

QUESTION: THE QUESTION OF SETTLEMENTS, HAS IT BEEN RAISED HERE OR IN JERUSALEM?

ATHERTON: WE DID DISCUSS HERE THE QUESTION OF SETTLEMENTS. THE FOREIGN MINISTER STATED THE EGYPTIAN POSITION ON THIS QUESTION, AND I HAVE REAFFIRMED OUR OWN POSITION ON THE QUESTION, WHICH IS, OF COURSE, VERY WELL KNOWN AND HAS BEEN STATED MANY TIMES ON THE PUBLIC RECORD.

QUESTION: THIS HAS BEEN ALSO CONVEYED TO THE ISRAELI SIDE WHEN YOU WERE IN JERUSALEM?

ATHERTON: THE SUBJECT CAME UP IN OUR DISCUSSIONS IN JERUSALEM AS WELL, YES.

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QUESTION: DO YOU SAY THAT THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM IS STILL THE MAIN PROBLEM IN THE PROCESS?

ATHERTON: IN TERMS OF THE NEGOTIATION OF THE DRAFT DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES, THIS DOES STILL REMAIN THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF THE DRAFT DECLARATION, AND IT IS ONE THAT WE ARE CONTINUING TO GIVE PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO.

QUESTION: WE UNDERSTAND, SIR THAT YOU HAVE REACHED AN UNDERSTANDING ON TWO POINTS OF THE SIX POINTS OF THIS PROPOSAL, MAINLY THE NATURE OF PEACE AND SECURE FRONTIERS.

ATHERTON: WELL I COULDN'T REALLY COMMENT ON THAT QUESTION WITHOUT CONTRADICTING MYSELF, COULD I, SINCE I SAID I WASN'T GOING TO COMMENT ON ANY OF THE SPECIFICS OF OUR DISCUSSION.

QUESTION: CAN THE FOREIGN MINISTER TELL US WHETHER THE GAP IS NARROWING BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES?

KAMEL: WELL, THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE GOING ON, AND THE INTENTION IS TO NARROW THE GAP. THIS WILL TAKE ITS TIME, AND AS ASST. SECRETARY ATHERTON SAID, WE WILL BE MEETING AGAIN TOMORROW.

HE WILL BE GOING BACK TO ISRAEL WITH OUR VIEWS AND I CAN'T
SAY MORE THAN THAT NOW.

QUESTION: HAS EGYPT PRESENTED A NEW PROPOSAL OR ARE THEY KEEPING
THE SAME PROPOSALS WITH SOME AMMENDMENTS.

KAMEL: NO, COMMENTING ON PRELIMINARY VIEWS WHICH MR. ATHERTON
BROUGHT TO US, WE ARE SENDING OUR COMMENTS ON THAT. OUR PROPOSALS

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ARE STILL HOLDING, AND THE SAME ON THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION AND
REGARDING WITHDRAWAL. I WOULD ADD THAT I EXPLAINED TO MR. ATHERTON
TODAY THAT THE CHOICE OF THIS PARTICULAR MOMENT, WHEN MR. ATHERTON
IS SHUTTling BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES, FOR ISSUING THIS DECISION
OF THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT IN CONTINUING WITH THE SETTLEMENTS IS
REALLY A VERY DANGEROUS THING. THE U.S. AS WELL AS ALL OTHER
COUNTRIES HAS STATED VERY CLEARLY THAT ESTABLISHING SETTLEMENTS
IS AN OBSTRUCTION TO PEACE. AND SINCE WE ARE NOW NEGOTIATING
NYB MOMENT TO CONFIRM THAT IT IS OBSTRUCTING
PEACE BY CONTINUING IN THE SETTLEMENT QUESTION.

QUESTION: AND WHAT WAS THE COMMENT OF MR. ATHERTON?

KAMEL: WELL THE AMERICAN POSITION IS KNOWN ON THE SETTLEMENTS,
BUT I AM NOT FREE TO GIVE HIS COMMENTS. THANK YOU. ELTS

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